

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support both of these bills, and I urge my colleagues to support them also.

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY SYSTEMS PRESERVATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RADANOVICH). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as someone who came to Congress because I believe that Federal Government should do more to be a constructive partner with our communities to help promote livability, I could not be more excited about developments that are taking place this week in Detroit. I just left the conference, the town meeting, on sustainable development where there were over 3100 people from around the country and more still registering. It was not so much a wrap-up of the President's Council of Sustainable Development, but rather a hand-off to citizen activists, students, business, government, nongovernmental agencies to deal with specific activities that they could do to help promote livable communities. There were a variety of workshops with people learning from one another, and the administration has announced 70 specific commitments to help promote that more sustainable future.

One of the programs that I am most pleased with was the Transportation and Community Systems Preservation Act. This was a provision in our TEA-21 legislation, the Surface Transportation Act last year, that was born in the Oregon experience where a group of private citizens pushed the State and Federal transportation agencies to consider an alternative to simply constructing a traditional bypass to look at what would happen if we were more thoughtful about the ways that we put pieces together.

The results of their research was stunning. It proved conclusively that by dealing with the integration of land use, transportation being more connected and giving people more choices that we could, in fact, reduce congestion more than simply having a pavement-only solution.

That found its way into TEA-21. I was happy to have supported it in our House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. The driving force in the Senate was my Senator, RON WYDEN, a former colleague here in the House, and it has opened the floodgates; over 500 applications from around the country totaling over \$400 million from people who understand the power of being able to plan their community. Sadly we are only able to award a small portion of those programs, approximately 39, although there are opportunities in the horizon to increase those in future years.

There may be some federal programs that obviously spend more money, but

I think there will be fewer that will have more of an impact than helping citizens sort out the right investments and allowing them to be part of framing those solutions.

The entire town meeting effort is an illustration of what livable communities are all about. It is not about Federal interference, but partnership. It is about giving people more choices rather than fewer and that will end up costing people less money rather than more.

It is not the solutions for livable communities that are pushing people to the edge financially. It is the consequences of throwing money at problems in an unplanned way, problems that were first created by not carefully planning and thinking about what we are doing.

A country that can put a man on the moon and bring him back safely over 20 years ago does not have to build a generation of failed infrastructure projects. It should not be illegal in most of America for a clerk working in a drug store to live in an apartment above that drug store rather than having to have to commute every day. The Federal Government should not pay people more to pave a creek than restore a wetland, especially if that wetland restoration will actually solve the problem as well or even better, and we should guarantee that people in communities, large and small, across America have a place at the table to discuss the impacts of infrastructure investments rather than being shut out by State bureaucracies.

Finally, the Federal Government itself should do more to lead by example, whether it is finally requiring the Post Office to obey the same laws and codes that the private sector or that local government itself needs to follow or, for that matter, having the House of Representatives do as good a job in our recycling efforts as a couple of ambitious Boy Scout troops do back home.

The bottom line is that the American public wants our families to be safe, economically secure and healthy. What is going on with the town meeting this week in Detroit is an example of how to do that. I hope that my colleagues will look at ways that each of us in Congress can do our best to help make our communities more livable.

THE CONTINUING STEEL IMPORT CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, the steel import crisis, which began in 1997, is still continuing today. The numbers tell the story. Total steel imports in 1998 were at the highest level ever, 41.5 million net tons of steel mill products. This was a 33 percent increase over imports in 1997, which also was a record year.

While the pressure was on as the House debated the steel issue earlier this year and overwhelmingly passed H.R. 975, we saw steel imports begin to come down in December 1998 and in January and February of this year. But as soon as the pressure let up with uncertainty over the fate of this legislation in the other body, steel imports shot up again in March. We saw a 25 percent increase in steel imports in March over the levels in February.

The U.S. market continues to be the market of last resort for many exporters. As markets overseas continue to face economic turmoil, exporters continue to ship unprecedented levels of steel into the United States, the world's most open market. In order to obtain hard currency, exporters have sent the world's oversupply of steel to the U.S., often at prices that bear no relation to the actual production costs.

In March we also saw some imports source and product switching, which all of us had feared. We saw an increase in imports of blooms, billets and slabs and in hot rolled sheet from countries not subject to the current trade cases.

The impacts of this steel import crisis cannot be overstated. Every single ton of dumped steel displaces a ton of domestic production. The United States industry is losing competitiveness because of these unfairly traded imports. Companies are finding that as prices drop and imports continue to increase, they cannot commit to future capital investments, they cannot commit to needed modernizations, and they cannot commit to additional research and development. These effects, if not reversed soon, could have a lasting implication on an important industry well into the 21st century.

Company by company the impact is also being felt in the short term. Four companies have filed for bankruptcy protection. Mills are dramatically cutting production in capacity utilization. Foreign producers that dump their products are now realizing the benefits of American companies' successful efforts to rebuild the market for steel products here in the United States, and most disturbing is the damage that is being done to many American families as steelworkers lose their jobs. As stated in the President's steel report in January, 10,000 Americans have lost their jobs because of this crisis. Many will never return to jobs that can provide the level of pay and benefits that were provided by the steelworker jobs that have been lost, and that does not take into account the impact on local community services where jobs are lost, the impact of suppliers. So the job number could be much larger.

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Some workers may not lose their jobs, but short work weeks, reduced shifts and lost hours can also have a devastating impact on their families. Those laid off and those with reduced hours are struggling to pay rent and mortgages, to put food on the table and

to provide their children with the things they need.

As I have stated before, this crisis does not just impact steelworkers and their families. The shortage or the imports affect outside contractors, suppliers and everyone in the community that depends on these steel mills. I recently read a statistic that for every one million tons of domestic steel lost, nearly 5,000 U.S. jobs are directly or indirectly affected.

The highly competitive United States steel industry cannot compete with massive foreign subsidies, closed home markets and industrial cartels that protect an enormous worldwide overcapacity. It is now time for Congress and our government to step in and take the steps necessary to provide the U.S. industry a fair and level playing field in the global marketplace.

I urge the other body to complete action on H.R. 975. I further urge the House to take up other important trade law bills, including H.R. 412, which I introduced; H.R. 1120, which was introduced by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON); and H.R. 1505, which was introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH).

The current steel import crisis must be stopped, and we must ensure that such a crisis will not happen again in the future.

I might add, I thought it was interesting that President Clinton even took the time to take this subject up with the Prime Minister of Japan because of their dumping practices.

STEEL IMPORTS ONCE AGAIN ON THE RISE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RADANOVICH). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) is recognized during morning hour debates for 3 minutes.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because the steelworkers in Northeast Arkansas and all over this country are frustrated, and they are the most productive steelworkers in the world. They have lost faith in their government's promise to uphold its basic trade laws.

The steel import figures for March show that imports are once again on the rise. Imports for March are 25 percent higher than the imports in February. Imports from Japan rose 36 percent; from Brazil, 54 percent; from Korea, 11 percent; from Indonesia, 339 percent. Compared to July of 1997, before the crisis began, Japan's imports are up 22 percent; Brazil's are up 25 percent; Korea, 77 percent; Indonesia, 889 percent.

Clearly, the steel crisis is not over.

Although they continue to assure us that they are negotiating and consulting with these nations, we continue to see higher rates of steel entering this Nation.

The President warned Japan Monday to reduce its steel shipments to the United States on a consistent basis or the government will act to block them. The President also said during a news conference that the U.S. would act to keep Japanese steel out of U.S. markets if those imports continued to exceed the levels existing before the Asian economic crisis.

How long does this crisis have to go on? Something must be done. We must take action now.

Arkansas steelworkers have lost faith in their government because we have failed them by failing to enforce our own trade laws.

The administration continues to sit on this problem without offering a substantive and timely remedy. Steelworkers need solid, immediate plans to end the flow of underpriced steel that is flooding our market. We cannot simply solve the world's financial crisis on the backs of the steelworkers of the United States. The time for action is now, as I have already said, strong and decisive action. For the sake of American steelworkers and their families, we must end this import crisis.

THE CONTINUING STEEL IMPORT CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from New York (Mr. QUINN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 2 minutes.

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, I would like associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) and also the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY).

We rise today to discuss the steel crisis that continues to grip the steel industry and its workers.

On March 17, this past year, 289 House Members passed the bipartisan Steel Recovery Act. This bipartisan legislation calls for quotas to be placed on foreign steel to get back to its pre-crisis levels of July, 1997.

The bill would also set up a steel monitoring system that would track the amount of steel imports into the United States by foreign countries.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to go into detail this morning about the reasons why our steel industry and its workers find themselves in this serious crisis. We have been through that in the months leading up to the vote on March 17. What I am here to say and to join the others in pointing out is that there still is a steel crisis in the United States and that we need something done immediately.

As many as four major steel companies are in bankruptcy right now, and we know that when those good-paying jobs disappear they disappear forever.

The need for our steel bill was clear on March 17, and today it is even more clear. 289 House Members believed that something must be done to stop these imports, as we continue to see higher rates of steel entering the country each and every day.

The administration may argue that the amount of steel imports for the month of March represents a 30 percent drop in imports since November of 1998; and, while that may be true, shipments from countries such as Brazil and Japan showed a significant increase.

It is important to point out that just yesterday the President warned Japan that the United States will take action if the steel imports are not returned to their pre-crisis levels. I believe that is an absolute positive step in the right direction, and I applaud the President for this action.

We must continue, though, in our action to make sure that passage of the bill that the House sent over is approved in the Senate and signed by the President of the United States.

On behalf of the American steelworkers and their families, I ask our administration and the Senate to act to end this crisis. This is not about free trade. It is about fair trade.

THE ITC SHOULD RULE DECISIVELY IN FAVOR OF THE U.S. STEEL INDUSTRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. WISE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 1 minute.

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, today the International Trade Commission holds a hearing into illegal steel dumping. Well, let me report, I was in the northern panhandle yesterday. The pain, both economic and personal, continues from illegal dumping of steel in this country by foreign nations. Over 10,000 jobs have been lost nationwide. Weirton Steel alone has lost over 750 jobs. Net sales for Weirton Steel are down \$76 million this quarter over last year, and as of March of this year the level of steel imports from Japan and Brazil were up 22 and 25 percent. These numbers show clearly this crisis, this steel crisis, is nowhere near over.

The decision from today's International Trade Commission hearing will not be given until mid-June, but I am urging the ITC to rule decisively in favor of the U.S. steel industry and its \$70 billion contribution to our economy and to Weirton Steel and to many others.

When we see a crime, we call 911. Well, this time West Virginia steelworkers need some help from this international assault.

TIME TO TAKE DECISIVE ACTION IN YUGOSLAVIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, late last week this House took up a resolution to continue the administration's policy of bombing Yugoslavia, and by a